UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/C.5/47/23
10 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-seventh session
FIFTH COMMITTEE
Agenda items 104 and 110

PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

PATTERN OF CONFERENCES

Report of the Committee on Conferences

Programme budget implications of installing an appropriate signalling system

INTRODUCTION

1. It will be recalled that in paragraph 21 of its resolution 46/190 of 20 December 1991, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in the context of the systematic and progressive replacement and upgrading of the equipment in the conference rooms, to make proposals to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session, taking advantage of the experience gained by other organizations of the United Nations system, on the usefulness and feasibility of installing an appropriate signalling system to enable systematically each speaker, as well as the Chairman and participants, whenever a speech time-limit was established in accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to monitor the time left before actually breaking the time-limit. Following consideration of a report of the Secretary-General (A/47/287) submitted pursuant to that request, the Committee on Conferences at its 341st meeting, on 27 August 1992, decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should install portable devices as described in paragraph 15 of the report in sufficient numbers and in the most cost-effective manner possible.

2. The Committee further requested the Secretariat, when preparing the relevant statement of programme budget implications, to take into account the number of meetings at each conference-servicing location with a view to determining the number of devices required.

3. The Committee recommended that organs that had decided on time-limits during their meetings should use the signalling system, which in the opinion of the Committee could lead to significant savings in conference-servicing resources. The Committee recommended that this possibility be brought to the attention of all organs and users.

A. Relationship of the requests to the proposed programme of work

4. The request by the Committee on Conferences is related to major programme 43, General services. The activities under that programme are carried out by the Office of General Services. Within their respective areas, corresponding organizational units at United Nations offices away from Headquarters, including the regional commissions, have been assigned comparable responsibilities as and when required.

B. Activities by which the proposed recommendation would be implemented

5. Following the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences, all conference centre administrations were requested to provide estimates of the devices required, taking into account the total number of meetings at each conference-servicing location. The following requirements were given:

Conference centre	Number of devices
New York	8
Geneva	3
Vienna	3
Nairobi	2
ECA	6
ESCAP	3
ECLAC	2
ESCWA	2
	29

6. Thus, should the General Assembly decide to approve the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences, a total of 29 portable signalling devices would be required.

C. Additional requirements at full cost

7. As noted in paragraphs 15 and 16 of A/47/287, the portable signalling system has been costed in New York at $8,560 for the first unit and $2,840 for each additional unit. For the 29 units being requested, the total requirements would therefore amount to $88,100, an average of $3,037 per unit, distributed as follows:

Budget section		Units	Price
41D	(Office of General Services)	8	24 300
41E	(Administration, Geneva)	3	9 100
41F	(Administration, Vienna)	3	9 100
41G	(Administration, Nairobi)	2	6 100
23	(ECA)	6	18 200
24	(ESCAP)	3	9 100
26	(ECLAC)	2	6 100
27	(ESCWA)	2	6 100
			88 100

D. Potential for absorption

8. It is estimated that the additional requirements outlined in section C above could be absorbed under the overall appropriations for sections 23, 24, 26, 27 and 41 of the programme budget for 1992-1993.

E. Summary

9. Accordingly, should the General Assembly approve the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences with respect to the installation of an appropriate signalling system, no additional appropriations would be required under sections 23, 24, 26, 27 or 41 of the programme budget for 1992-1993.